

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the thorough review of the present application. Based upon the amendments and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application and allowance of the pending claims.

The Present Invention

The invention includes a method and apparatus for implementing dynamic tunnel access sessions at a network device within a communications network. The tunnel access sessions are created between a network device, typically a gateway device and a network service, such as the Internet or a corporate intranet and provide for transparent tunnel access sessions for the user/subscribers who access the communications network via the network device. The present invention does not require special client-side software to be loaded on the remote host of the subscriber, and does not require any manual configuration of the remote host. Instead, the gateway device establishes a tunnel, whereby the gateway device operates as one end point and the enterprise network operates as the other end point. Rather than configuring and reconfiguring the remote host each time a tunnel access session is created, the remote host provides the network device with the appropriate subscriber profile information necessary to establish a tunnel access session to a particular network service. Thereafter, the network device accesses the subscriber profile information each time a tunnel access session is warranted for that subscriber to access the network service. In essence, the network device takes the place of the remote host as an end point of the tunnel, spoofing the network service. The tunnel access session that is established from the network device to the network service is such that the network service views the network device as though it were the remote host. By allowing the network device to operate as the end point of the tunnel, the remote host is not limited to a single tunnel per session, but may have numerous tunnel access sessions established simultaneously during a single log-on session.

Appl. No.: 09/693,369
Amdt. dated 01/21/2005
Reply to Office action of 09/22/94

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the finding that claims 5-8, 11, 15 and 18-20 contain patentable subject matter that will be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim. Independent Claims 1, 9 and 12 have been amended to include the limitations of dependent claims 5, 11 and 15. Based on these amendments to the claims, independent Claims 1, 9 and 12 and the corresponding dependent claims 1-4, 6-8, 10, 13-14 and 16-20 should be in condition for allowance.


Conclusion

In view of the proposed amended claims and the remarks submitted above, it is respectfully submitted that the present claims are in condition for immediate allowance. It is therefore respectfully requested that a Notice of Allowance be issued. The Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney to resolve any remaining issues in order to expedite examination of the present invention.

Appl. No.: 09/693,369
Amdt. dated 01/21/2005
Reply to Office action of 09/22/94

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Respectfully submitted,

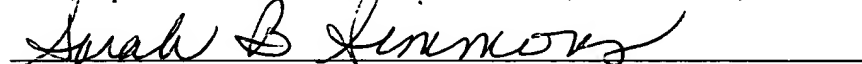


James C. Edwards
Registration No. 44,667

Customer No. 00826
ALSTON & BIRD LLP
Bank of America Plaza
101 South Tryon Street, Suite 4000
Charlotte, NC 28280-4000
Tel Charlotte Office (704) 444-1000
Fax Charlotte Office (704) 444-1111

"Express Mail" mailing label number EV 231897481 US
Date of Deposit January 21, 2005

I hereby certify that this paper or fee is being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service under 37 CFR 1.10 on the date indicated above and is addressed to:
Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450



Sarah B. Simmons
CLT01/4691499v1

Appl. No.: 09/693,369
Amdt. dated 01/21/2005
Reply to Office action of 09/22/94

APPENDIX

Attached hereto are the following:

Three (3) REPLACEMENT SHEETS, FIGS. 1, 2, 3.

Appl. No.: 09/693,369
Amdt. dated 01/21/2005
Reply to Office action of 09/22/94

Amendments to the Drawings:

In response to the requirement for new drawings set for the Examiner in Office Action dated September 22, 2004, new formal drawings (three (3) sheets, Figs. 1 – 3) are attached hereto as Replacement Sheets in the Appendix.